

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA
CHARLESTON DIVISION**

Nautilus Insurance Company,

Plaintiff,

v.

Cory Fleming,

Defendant.

Case No. 2:22-cv-1307-RMG

ORDER

A jury returned a verdict in favor of Plaintiff Nautilus Insurance Company on its claim against Defendant Cory Fleming under the South Carolina Unfair Trade Practices Act (“SCUTPA”) on January 8, 2025. (Dkt. No. 322). The jury awarded to Nautilus actual damages of \$1,250,00.00. (*Id.*).

SCUTPA makes unlawful “unfair or deceptive acts or practices in the conduct of any trade or commerce” and provides that the trial court “shall” award treble damages where “the court finds that the use or employment of the unfair or deceptive method, act or practice was a willful or knowing violation of” the Act. S.C. Code Ann. § 39-5-20, § 39-5-140. Plaintiff established at trial that Defendant Cory Fleming committed multiple acts of unfair and deceptive practices in his handling as an attorney of the wrongful death and survival claims of the Gloria Satterfield Estate. These include multiple unethical communications, as the plaintiff’s attorney, with a potential defendant in the case, Richard Alexander Murdaugh, despite the fact Murdaugh was represented by counsel. Further, Fleming made false representations to opposing counsel and the excess carrier regarding alleged communications with one of the beneficiaries of the Satterfield Estate and with a potential issuer of a structured settlement. Fleming’s unfair and deceptive acts played a critical role in Murdaugh’s ability to ultimately steal over \$4 million dollars in settlement funds.

The Court finds that Defendant Fleming committed a “willful or knowing violation” of SCUTPA and hereby trebles Plaintiff’s damages, resulting in an award of \$3,750,000.00.

Plaintiff is also entitled to an award of reasonable attorney’s fees and costs under the Act. S.C. Code Ann. § 39-5-140(a). Plaintiff is directed to provide the Court with itemized information regarding attorney fees and costs which it seeks to be awarded no later than January 16, 2025. Any opposition to the proposed award shall be filed seven days thereafter.

AND IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Richard M. Gergel
Richard Mark Gergel
United States District Judge

January 9, 2025
Charleston, South Carolina